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A.—(*a*) Yes.

(*b*) The information required is contained in the report which has been published and placed at the disposal of the Press.

(*c*) Not necessarily.

(*d*) No. The comprehensive scheme of road development prepared by the Special Engineer for Road Development includes proposals for a road to connect Calicut with Coondapoor and thence to the Bombay Presidency frontier and also for the bridging of certain rivers and streams in the South Kanara district. These proposals will be considered by Government along with the comprehensive scheme.

(*e*) A statement [a] showing the amount spent by local bodies on trunk roads during the three years ending 1933–34 is laid on the table. Figures for 1934–35 for all the local bodies are not available.

(*f*) Yes.

(*g*) A list [a] of the members of the Board of Communications (which has taken the place of the old Road Board) is appended.

(*h*) The interests of local bodies are represented by three members, of whom the President, District Board, Malabar, is one. There is no separate representation for each district.

Sanitary Engineering

Tap-rate system of water charges in mufassal municipalities.

* 662 *Q.*—Mr. C. Basu Dev: Will the Hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(*a*) what is the present method of charging for water-supply in mufassal municipalities;

(*b*) whether it is a fact that in mufassal municipalities, there is a wholesale change from metering to tap-rate system; if so, why;

(*c*) whether the Government have approved of such a change to tap-rate system; if so, on what grounds; and

(*d*) whether the water meters in mufassal municipalities have not been found to be inaccurate in recording consumption of water?

A.—(*a*) The Government have issued model by-laws relating to house connexions for adoption by municipal councils which have introduced house-connexion schemes. These by-laws require that every house to which supply is given should be provided with a meter, and that charges should be fixed for supply in excess of the free allowance provided for in them. The free allowance is permitted only in the case of water supplied for domestic purposes. In the case of water supplied for non-domestic purposes, all

[a] Printed as Appendix V on pages 322–324 infra.

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water is charged for in accordance with the rates fixed in the by-laws and no free allowance is permitted; but to compensate for this and in the case of certain institutions such as mosques, temples, etc., some municipalities charge a low or even nominal rate for the water consumed for non-domestic purposes in such institutions.

(*b*), (*c*) & (*d*) Out of the 29 municipalities which have introduced house connexion schemes, only the following eight municipalities have so far adopted the tap-rate system:—

(1) Adoni.
(2) Ellore.
(3) Bezwada.
(4) Trichinopoly.
(5) Erode.
(6) Vellore.
(7) Coimbatore.
(8) Negapatam.

Even in these eight municipalities, tap-rate system is not permitted in the case of water supplied for non-domestic purposes.

The Government have permitted local bodies to adopt the tap-rate system or the meter system according to their choice. The main reasons for this change are:—

(1) the meters easily get out of order,

(2) they are liable to be tampered with,

(3) they require more expert supervision than what they are likely to receive ordinarily in the municipality, and

(4) they are expensive to buy and expensive to maintain in good order.

Mr. V. M. Ramaswami Mudaliyar:—"May I ask, Sir, why the Government are compelling the mufassal municipalities to meter every house when metering has been given up in the city?"

The Hon. the Raja of Bobbili:—"Because the rules in the municipalities require it. Those municipalities that have adopted the tap-rate system should meter their connexions."

Mr. V. M. Ramaswami Mudaliyar:—"If I understand the Hon. the Minister aright, he says that the municipalities are given the option to levy the tap-rate or fix meters?"

The Hon. the Raja of Bobbili:—"In specific cases, the Government have agreed that the tap-rate system may be tried.

Mr. V. M. Ramaswami Mudaliyar:—"Is the Hon. the Minister aware of a recent decision by a court of law that levy of tap-rate is not authorized by the District Municipalities Act, if so, whether the Hon. the Minister has under consideration suitable amendments to the Act?"

The Hon. the Raja of Bobbili:—"The Government propose to bring up amendments in the near future."